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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
Press Service



WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION
DECEMBER 2, 1936 (WEDNESDAY)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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RICE, THE ORIENTAL STAFF OF LIFE

Kipling readers remember the story of Kim, the boy who held out the lama's rice bowl and begged, urging passers-by to "acquire merit" by giving rice to such a holy person. Sharing one's rice or food is regarded in India as a special virtue, just as wasting a grain of rice is a sin in these thickly populated countries where food is limited.

No one in our United States need go short on rice this year. The four rice growing states have produced a bumper crop. The harvest from 895,000 acres is slightly more than 45 million bushels. The southern states -- Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas, have grown 15 percent more rice than last year, and California growers nearly 35 percent more. Foreign rice production is also larger than in 1935, which means that we will export relatively little. Rice is always a cheap food considering the 1600 calories to the pound which it furnishes, but this year because of the large supply it may be even lower in cost than usual.

Rice is said to be the world's largest crop. It exceeds either wheat or corn, as the staple food of the greatest number of people. More than half the world's population eats rice three times a day, and often little else. With our great variety and abundance of foods to choose from, we in the United States need never be limited to any one food. To us rice supplies a cheap and palatable source of energy to be balanced with meat, milk, vegetables, and other foods.

Well-cooked rice can be eaten at any meal, whether it's breakfast, lunch, dinner, or supper.

The bland rice flavor goes with many foods of more pronounced taste. Rice, for instance, is the perfect accompaniment to curried meat or fish, or to braised liver, or to a rich cheese sauce. Its white color is a pleasing contrast to reds, greens, yellows and browns in sauces, vegetables, and side dishes. Its texture makes it a good carrier for moist foods like gravies and stews. Recipes for using rice in these and many other good ways are found in "Leaflet 112-I", -- "Cooking American Varieties of Rice", which can be obtained free by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Some find it difficult to boil rice so that the grains stay whole. Use lots of water and don't overcook, says the Bureau of Home Economics. Allow 2 quarts of actively boiling water, salted with 2 teaspoons of salt, for each cup of washed rice. Add the rice gradually to the rapidly boiling salted water. Then reduce the heat so that the rice boils gently, and cook with the pan uncovered until the grains are tender and have no hard center when pressed between the thumb and finger. Rapid boiling breaks the kernels, and cooking at too low a temperature allows them to absorb so much water that they become sticky. Drain in a colander or sieve and pour hot water through the rice to remove loose starch and separate the grains. Cover with a clean cloth and set over hot water on the back of the stove, or place in a warm oven for a short time. The kernels will continue to swell. One cup of uncooked rice yields about 3-1/3 cups of boiled rice.

Sometimes when the local water is hard, boiled rice will have a grayish or greenish cast. This discoloration can be prevented by a pinch of cream of tartar or a little lemon juice in the cooking water.

Brown rice is cooked in the same way, but takes longer. After boiling gently for about 30 minutes, it is covered and simmered until it is cooked through and the water is absorbed. It does not become sticky.

We grow three main types of rice in this country, the long-grain, medium-grain, and short-grain. Plant scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture have carried on studies for the past 25 years and have aided in the selection of the varieties of rice best adapted to our growing conditions. They are at present continuing to experiment with cross-breeding of varieties for the improvement of the strains now grown. In spite of the importance of the rice crop, we have still much to learn in respect to varieties that are satisfactory in disease resistance, yield per acre, and good milling and table qualities.

A series of tests by the Bureau of Home Economics on the cooking quality of the varieties now chiefly grown in the United States showed that there are one or more desirable varieties under each of the three types. The bureau found, however, that each kind or variety of rice has a slightly different cooking time. It would be helpful if the variety name were stated on the retail package and if two varieties were not mixed in packaging.

About 66 percent of all the rice sold in the United States is of the Blue Rose variety. This is one that takes 22 minutes to boil properly. Other varieties and their cooking times are: Long-grained, Rexoro, 16 minutes; Fortuna, 21 minutes; Edith, 22 minutes; Lady Wright, 23 minutes. In the medium-grained rice, besides Blue Rose, Early Prolific cooks in 24 minutes. In the short-grained group Caloro, a Japanese type, was the only one tested, and it cooked in 20 minutes.

All of these varieties are on the market as white rice, and some as brown, or unpolished rice. There are six official grades for white rice and four for brown rice. In addition there are other grades for "broken" rices. When perfectly formed grains of rice are wanted for appearance' sake, a housewife chooses the higher grades; when she expects to mix the rice with something else, the less expensive grades or even broken rice will have just as much food value and answer

the purpose. Bulk rice is cheaper than rice in packages. Since rice should always be washed before it is cooked, there is no objection to using unpackaged rice. The talc coating sometimes used in polishing rice is harmless and washes off easily.

Brown rice can be found in some markets, slightly more expensive than white milled rice because it is harder to keep and there is less demand for it. It is the same as white rice except that the outer covering of the kernel has not been removed. It therefore is higher in food value, retaining its minerals and vitamins B and G.

Families living near rice mills can sometimes get rice polishings and add them to cornmeal or wheat flour to make more nutritious bread. This is very valuable for those on restricted low-cost diets. Rice polishings turn rancid easily and so cannot be marketed far from the mill.



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

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DEC. 9, 1936 (WEDNESDAY)

LIBR

U.S.

HOME ECONOMICS

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

A RECORD PEANUT CROP

The peanut-man will have plenty of "goobers" for his customers this winter. The oil mills that crush peanuts will be well supplied. Peanut butter manufacturers, candy makers, and salted peanut distributors will have plenty of raw material with which to work.

The biggest crop of peanuts on record was harvested this year. According to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1,311,560,000 pounds of peanuts have been produced. Over half of this huge crop was raised in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida - 736 million pounds. Other peanut farmers in Virginia, the Carolinas, and three or four other southern states raised the rest.

Three main kinds of peanuts are grown -- Virginia, Spanish, and Runner. A good share of the Virginia Jumbos are salted or roasted in the shell. Formerly peanut butter consisted almost solely of mixtures of Virginia and Spanish type peanuts, but recently a good many Runner type peanuts have been used for butter. The Runner type is plentiful this season.

Two hundred million pounds of peanuts may go directly to the oil mills. There's an extra heavy demand for peanut oil for the manufacture of compounds used for baking and frying, and for table margarine. With feed grains scarcer because of the past season's drought, the hogs going to the 1937 market are not as well-

fattened as usual, and so there is less lard available just now. The demand is also partly due to the light supply of cottonseed oil. Housewives will doubtless be buying more of the solidified or hydrogenated cooking fats made from vegetable oils, including peanut oil.

A small part of the peanut oil will be refined and sold as salad oil, or manufactured into ready-to-use salad dressings. Institutions are said to have placed rather large orders for peanut oil, because of its good flavor and the fact that when used in cooking it does not scorch and break down chemically so quickly as some other fats. This makes it excellent for deep-fat frying. The Bureau of Home Economics found in the course of a series of experiments on potato chips fried in different fats, that the judges rated the chips cooked in peanut oil highest for "general desirability." They scored the chips on color, aroma, crispness and flavor.

New factories in a great many peanut-growing localities give evidence of the continuing popularity of peanut butter. A large part of the 1937 crop will be marketed in this form. Peanut butter, peanut candies, and salted peanuts, in about this order, are the most important outlets for the peanut crop, in addition to what is crushed for peanut oil. However, we shall eat some of our peanuts indirectly, as peanut-fed pork, ham, or bacon. A great many peanuts are always used as feed for hogs. The peanuts are not harvested for the hogs; the animals "hog-off" the nuts in the ground for themselves.

A word of warning from the diet experts to the nibblers of salted peanuts at the dinner table, and the boys who like fresh roasted peanuts "by the peck." And for the children who love peanut brittle and other peanut candies. Peanuts are a highly concentrated food. They are one-third to one-half fat, according to variety, one-fourth protein, and about one-fourth carbohydrates and minerals. If it were not for the high proportion of fat we might depend on them to a greater extent as a source of protein, for peanut protein is of excellent quality. But twice as much fat as protein in a food makes it very rich. So it's best to eat peanuts in relatively small amounts at a time, and to mix them with other foods that have less fat.



Peanuts are a good source of vitamin B and an excellent source of vitamin G. As to minerals, they are rich in phosphorus, but poor in calcium, and only a fair source of iron. Although they are called "nuts" and included in some of the food definitions as nuts, they are really legumes, members of the pea family. The fruit or pod matures in the soil instead of on the vines.

While it is usually more convenient to buy peanut butter as sold in glass jars or tins, a housewife who has a food grinder can make her own peanut butter when she has peanuts on hand. She can suit the family as to the texture of the butter, whether smooth or somewhat granulated. For butter, use the roasted shelled nuts with the red skins removed. Grind them, using the finest knife on the food grinder. It may be necessary to put the butter twice through the grinder, adding salt to taste before the second grinding.

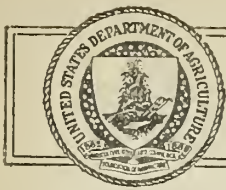
The sandwich fillings made by combining peanut butter with other materials are a matter of the housewife's invention applied to what she has on hand. Peanut butter with chopped dried fruits; with cream cheese; with hardcooked eggs; with sliced mild onion; with grated raw carrots; with tomato catsup,---these are some possibilities in the sandwich line.

Peanut butter is good in place of part of the shortening in biscuits and cup cakes, and in sauces for vegetables. Peanut butter soup, made like any creamed vegetable soup, is delicious and quickly prepared. Some prefer canned tomatoes as the liquid rather than milk.

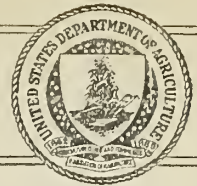
A good peanut loaf for dinner is made by combining equal parts of peanuts, chopped carrots, bread crumbs and canned tomatoes, binding the mixture with one or two eggs, and seasoning with melted butter, salt, and pepper. This will bake in a moderate oven in 30 minutes.

Chopped or whole peanuts can be creamed and served on toast for lunch or dinner. They are an addition to almost any salad, and to many of the scalloped baked vegetables,---for instance, scalloped onions with peanuts. They are popular in muffins, cookies, cakes, and even mixed with waffle batter.

One way and another, most of us will be taking advantage of the billion-pound crop of peanuts this winter to enrich and vary the usual menus.



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

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THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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CHRISTMAS ORANGES, THEN AND NOW

The custom of putting bright golden oranges into the children's Christmas stockings started over a generation ago. Oranges were a luxury then, to be enjoyed chiefly at the holiday season. When they did appear on the breakfast table in those days, oftentimes only half an orange was served to a person!

What would the people of that day say to the generous glasses of chilled orange juice that 1936 Americans consume almost daily, to make sure of getting enough of vitamins and other protective elements? Or what would they say to the two tablespoons of orange juice a day that every well-fed baby now has from early infancy; or to the countless ingenious ways we use oranges on the table, in sauces, desserts, and preserves? And what would they think of buying oranges by the bushel basket or the crate, or in large net sacks?

Some of the increased demand for oranges is due to their excellent rating with the nutritionists, who have helped to spread information about the place of oranges in the well-rounded diet. A medium-sized orange a day, or its equivalent, for everybody sums up the recommendations of the nutrition specialists on this point. The citrus fruits, and oranges in particular, are the richest sources of vitamin C we have. As they are commonly used without cooking, all the vitamin C

value is obtained, if the oranges are not cut or squeezed for juice until just before they are served. Exposure of the juice to air lessens the vitamin C content and changes the flavor. Oranges are also a fair source of vitamins B and G.

In Riverside, California, there is a bronze tablet by an interesting old orange tree, which tells part of the story of that jump from half an orange on the breakfast table to the orange abundance of the present. The tree is one of the two "parent" Washington Navel orange trees, from which have descended most of the trees in the Navel orange orchards of the southwest. These experimental trees were sent to a Mrs. Tibbets, in Riverside, in 1873, by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. When they fruited in 1878, a new era in California's economic history began. (People visiting the Nation's capital can see a sister tree of the Riverside Washington Navel orange trees in the greenhouse of the department.)

These trees were propagated by the department from stock sent from Bahia, Brazil, a few years earlier. They were tried in various orange-growing sections of the country. In Florida, the variety failed to develop well. But in California, it was found to be so much superior to any previously grown types that it was soon adopted for commercial culture.

The growing of Valencia oranges in California was a later and comparatively recent development. It supplements the Washington Navel crop to make a continuous year-around supply of oranges from this state. This year about 15 million 70-pound boxes of oranges, (exclusive of Valencias), will be harvested in California, and most of these will be of the Washington Navel variety, all propagated from the two famous Riverside trees in about 60 years. California produces more Valencia-type oranges than Navels, but they come on the market later in the year, and production figures for 1937 are not yet available. Last season there were more than 18 million boxes of Valencias grown in California.

Meantime, orange growing has been flourishing in Florida since the sixties, when the railroads entered into the commercial development of the industry, as they did some years later in California. Although oranges were planted by the Spaniards three centuries ago in the St. Augustine area, they remained a door-yard fruit as long as the only way of transporting them was by river boats. We shall have more oranges from Florida this season than last -- 21 million boxes as compared with 18 million in the 1935-36 season. They will be packed 90 pounds to the box. The Parson Brown variety came on the market in October and November, and now we are getting the mid-season variety, the Pineapple, which continues until about the middle of March. The Valencia is the late Florida orange, in season from early March through May. About the time its season is over, the California Valencias come on the market.

Texas will also market more than 1,400,000 boxes this year of the ninety-pound size. Arizona grows oranges, too, and Alabama and Mississippi have the hardy Satsuma type in the fall, all adding to the grand total produced. So we are assured of our oranges one way and another throughout the year, and at prices most of us consider moderate in relation to the rest of the budget.

In addition to the nutritionists who have acquainted people with the great value of oranges in the diet, and the plant scientists who introduced the popular Washington Navel variety, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has other workers who have played a part in the tremendous growth of the orange industry. Plant scientists have studied the diseases of orange trees and fruit. They have helped perfect refrigeration in transit and methods of handling oranges at the orchards. Entomologists have studied the control of insect pests of citrus fruit. Market specialists have encouraged sorting and grading fruit for quality and size. The Weather Bureau furnishes growers with special frost warnings to enable them to

safeguard their fruit in the groves with heaters.

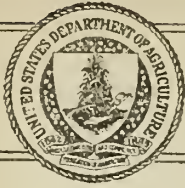
Chemists have given attention to by-products which might be salvaged from low-grade but wholesome fruit, — for example, the marmalades, pectin, cordials, and wines. They have studied problems incidental to the canned orange juice industry, working toward improvement of flavor, color, and keeping quality.

When the housewife goes to buy oranges she has her choice of smaller or larger ones, running from 126 to 216 to the box. Those that pack 176 to 200 to the box are good family sizes, but sometimes the small thin-skinned oranges contain plenty of juice and are good bargains. Oranges sold in colored net bags are usually marked as to size by the box designations, as "150's" or "216's", or the number of fruit in the bag is given.

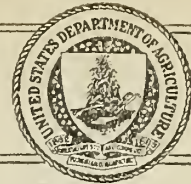
The best quality oranges are firm, heavy with juice, and have a fine-textured skin for the variety. Florida and Texas oranges are sometimes "russet" in color. This does not affect the flavor, nor do surface blemishes like slight scars or scratches. Soft wet spots mean decay, which cannot be cut away as in some fruits. Puffy, spongy, light-weight round oranges should be avoided as they are likely to be deficient in juice and flavor. The "kid-glove" types, however, like tangerines, Satsumas, King and mandarin oranges, are exceptions in respect to a loose puffy skin, but the juiciest ones will be fairly heavy for their size.

One often sees the words "color added" stamped on an orange. This means that the orange has gone through a dye bath to give it more orange color. When this trade practice is applied to fully mature oranges of varieties that may not be as highly colored as people seem to demand, it is permissible, for the present. The dye is harmless, but the customer has a right to know what she is buying. Another permissible treatment for oranges is by ethylene gas, which reveals the natural yellow color of ripe fruit.

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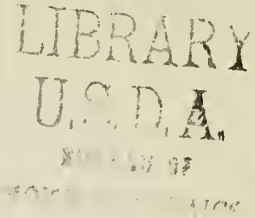


U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

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DECEMBER 23, 1936 (WEDNESDAY)



THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

WINTER PRESERVES

The able housewife knows how to make meals interesting by simple changes in the flavor and appearance of well-known foods or in the accessories she uses. "Accessories" include the colorful jelly that goes with a leg of lamb, the tart preserves that enhance the mild flavor of chicken, or the spicy conserve that combines so well with beef.

About this time of year many find that the supply of preserves from last summer's fresh fruit has dwindled. Maybe the homemaker put up less than usual, or maybe she drew rather heavily on the stock for Christmas gifts. Winter preserves are entirely possible with materials from the grocer's shelves and the storage cellar.

Check them over and see what changes are feasible with the old stand-bys. Beginning with the fresh fruits available all winter in most sections of the country, there are oranges, grapefruit, lemons, cranberries, and apples.

Anyone who has not tried "amber marmalade" made from one orange, one grapefruit, and one lemon has a treat in store for the family, and an economical one at that. The three pieces of fruit, with the necessary sugar, will yield about 5 pints of delicious marmalade costing less than half a dollar at present prices for citrus fruits and sugar. Oranges and lemons without the grapefruit will also

make good marmalade. It used to be thought necessary to cook the fruit for amber marmalade on three separate days, but the Bureau of Home Economics has worked out a quick process for making it in about 2 hours. Here it is:

Select one orange, one grapefruit, and one lemon, each of a yellow, smooth, thick-skinned type, free from blemishes. Remove the peel and slice it very thin. Parboil it three times by adding one quart of cold water, bringing to the boiling point, and cooking for 5 minutes, then discarding the water after each cooking. Cut the pulp into thin slices, remove the seeds and "rag", and combine the pulp and drained parboiled peel. To each pressed measure of this mixed fruit pulp and parboiled skins, add three times the measure of water, and boil rapidly for 40 minutes before measuring for the sugar. Then add an equal quantity of sugar, a little salt, and boil rapidly for 25 minutes, or until the jelly stage is reached. If a thick marmalade is desired, boil longer, but watch to prevent scorching. Stir to distribute the fruit. Put into hot sterilized glasses, and cover with paraffin when cold.

Other fruits are available for winter preserves: Cranberries will be on the market for several months to come. With their high pectin and acid content they rank among the best jelly-makers, and every housewife knows how quickly a batch of cranberry sauce can be cooked to go with a dinner of turkey or roast chicken or to use as a filling for an openfaced pie. For those who do not care for the cranberry skins, there's the strained molded sauce with the pulp pressed through a sieve, and also the clear sparkling jelly from the juice alone. It is one of the most beautiful, gorgeous-colored jellies of all.

Cranberry jelly should be molded in jelly glasses of a size that will be just right for one meal, for cranberry products tend to "weep". This jelly will keep its fine fresh fruit flavor for some time if sealed and stored in a cool dark place.



Honey-cranberry jam is another good cranberry preserve. Use 1 cup of water; 1-1/2 cups of honey; and 1 quart of cranberries. Cook slowly until the berries are soft. Then remove the berries but continue boiling the sirup until you have just enough to cover the berries. Put the berries back in the hot sirup, pour into jars and seal. Orange and cranberry conserve is still another possibility, not to mention the raw cranberry relish now enjoying a great vogue.

The apples open up another wide variety. Some of the winter apples are among the best jelly makers. Apple mint jelly, with a few drops of peppermint flavoring and some green coloring, is a delicious accompaniment to lamb--and to many other meats as well.

"Apple compote" is a near relative of the preserve family, though not so sweet. The apples are cooked in a medium sirup (equal parts of sugar and water) until they are tender but still shapely, and the sirup is concentrated until it is rich and thick and is poured over the apples. To make a hit with the family, color the sirup red and serve the compote with hard sauce. Red cinnamon candies will do the coloring for you and add a spicy flavor.

Several of the dried fruits make good winter preserves, either alone or in combination. Apricots, peaches, prunes, with sufficient sugar to class as jams, are all good. Prunes with apricots, spiced prunes, and prune and date jam are "different". And there's that delicious combination of dried apricots with canned pineapple. Raisins, figs, and dates combine well with these preserves, and raisins with cranberries are an excellent preserve-like pie filling.

Spiced Prunes

1 pound dried prunes
1 quart water
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 cup sugar

8 whole allspice
8 whole cloves
3 small pieces stick cinnamon
1/4 cup vinegar

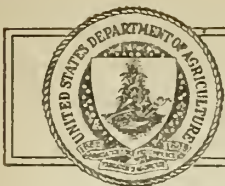
Select large prunes, wash well, and soak overnight in the water. Add the sugar and spices, tied in a cheesecloth bag, and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Add the vinegar and cook about 10 minutes longer, or until the sirup is fairly thick.

Apricot and Pineapple Jam

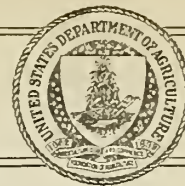
1 pound dried apricots	1-1/2 pounds sugar
2 No.2 cans crushed pineapple	1/2 teaspoon salt

Wash the apricots and soak them overnight in the juice drained from the canned pineapple. In the morning chop the apricots. Combine the fruit and all the juice with the sugar and salt and heat slowly. Stir frequently and cook for about 25 minutes. Pour into hot sterilized jars, seal, and store in a cool place.





U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
Press Service



WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION
DECEMBER 30, 1936 (WEDNESDAY)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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FOOD RESEARCH IN 1936

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Several times a week for the past fifty-two weeks you have probably filled the family market basket at the local store. Have you ever speculated on the figures behind the scene who had a part in the food products you have just selected? One must go far back of the retailer who has completed the final transaction. And back of the farmer, even, who grew the fruits, the vegetables, the meat animals, the poultry. Farther back even than the manufacturers of packaged and canned foods made from agricultural materials.

Behind all these distributors and producers of food are the scientists -- the people who are continually working for better kinds of foodstuffs, handled with less waste, and reaching you, the consumer, in more perfect condition. Numbered among the scientists also are the nutritionists who point out the relation between good diet and physical well-being, and advise what to put in the market basket every week. Economists, chemists, and regulatory agents also belong in the picture.

As a housewife, interested in buying the right kinds of foods, you doubtless think first of the work of the Bureau of Home Economics, especially if you



have had a copy of the bulletin on "Diets to Fit the Family Income." Whatever the limitations of your food budget, this publication is a guide to the best food values for the money you have to spend.

Then on various items in the market basket, the bureau has conducted special studies during 1936. Take oranges and tomato juice, for example. The bureau's vitamin studies have shown that both these foods are important for vitamin C. Quantity for quantity, however, orange juice is two to three times richer in this necessary element than canned tomato juice. So you buy intelligently by comparing the relative cost of the quantities of the two juices needed to provide the vitamin C.

And when you choose your vegetables, do you judge them according to wastiness as well as appearance and food value? One study made by the bureau shows that onions, tomatoes, young carrots, and snap beans lose less than 10 percent as waste in preparation for cooking. Vegetables having waste of less than 20 percent are potatoes, sweetpotatoes, turnips, cabbage, cauliflower, eggplant, broccoli and squash. The vegetable having the greatest waste is green corn on the cob with 75 percent, and those vegetables growing in pods -- peas and lima beans. Kale and spinach waste about 50 and 40 percent, respectively.

The cooking qualities of different varieties of potatoes, of green soybeans, of fats for deep-fat frying, and various other foodstuffs has been tested and tasted. The rib roast of beef in your basket illustrates the cooperative meat studies which the bureau carries on jointly with the Bureau of Animal Industry and state experiment stations, in which the cooking test is the function of the Bureau of Home Economics. While these studies are primarily intended as a guide to the production of better meat, they aim at better standards for selection and cooking. The bureau found, for one thing, that less shrinkage occurs when meat is roasted by a constant-moderate temperature, or by the quicksear, slow-finish method, both of which allow the meat to cook slowly and evenly, and thus hold its juices.

Hone canning is another of the important research lines. During the year, the most recent canning recommendations for fruits, vegetables, and meats were brought together in a new Farmers' Bulletin, No. 1762-F. For safety and economy, the steam pressure canner is recommended for corn, peas, beans, and all the other non-acid vegetables, and for all meats and poultry canned at home.

Practically every vegetable and fruit in your basket has at some time concerned the plant scientists of the department. Just at present the wheat that goes into your bag of flour is getting special attention. You have bought peas and tomatoes in midwinter because plant breeders have found out which varieties can be grown successfully to provide a year around supply, and have endeavored to standardize these varieties. Cabbage may be grown almost everywhere, but the selection of superior varieties of cabbage, or any other vegetables or fruits is the result of years of study. When scientists produce a disease-resistant strain of lettuce that can be grown during the winter in the mild climate of California or Arizona and shipped to northern and eastern markets, they help an agricultural industry which we cannot now do without. We have become accustomed to putting "protective" salad greens even in our winter market baskets.

Some of you have possibly a basket of strawberries among your selections, even though it is the end of December. Florida began shipping berries about two weeks ago, and shipments from there will continue to increase for the next two months. Later crops come from Louisiana and other areas north of Florida. The Bureau of Plant Industry has been particularly interested in recent years in breeding strawberry varieties of better quality for eating fresh, for canning, preserving and using in other ways. Seven such varieties have been introduced. They are now being grown commercially in sufficient quantity so that some of them will find their way to your spring market basket.

That carton of "Government Graded" eggs; the "U.S. Prime" stamped on your roast of beef; the "Grade B" on your canned peaches; the "92 score" of your pound of butter, and numerous other indications of grading on foods you have bought during the year represent an improvement in selling methods brought about by the grading work of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. This is the bureau that told us this fall about the record crops of onions, grapefruits, peanuts and turkeys, so that we have known these would be good food buys from the price standpoint.

Let's look at that roast of beef again. In addition to the quality grade mark, there is a little round purple stamp on it that says, "U.S. Inspected and Passed." This means that inspectors from the Bureau of Animal Industry saw to it that your cut came from a healthy animal. The meat inspection work has been going on for years, but the report for this year is that there have been far fewer animals than usual condemned for bovine tuberculosis. Meat studies by the bureau eventually affect your market basket, too.

Research of the Bureau of Dairy Industry has made some contributions to your grocery order. That piece of cheddar cheese is only one of the three cheese types the scientists have improved. Domestic Swiss cheese and the mild, soft Bel Paese cheese have been 1936 projects. The texture of ice creams; the use of whey; and the packaging of dried milk powder are some other recent food studies of the bureau.

Chemists of the department engaged in food research are the ones who anticipate the commercial developments that bring new products to the grocer's shelves. Canned grapefruit juice and orange juice have been greatly improved in flavor by scientists of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. Many other citrus by-products such as marmalade, confections, and beverages have been tested as uses for fruits that it is unprofitable to market as such. Studies of frozen-pack fruits and

and vegetables are designed to make possible carrying them over from seasons of plenty to seasons of scarcity or relative scarcity in as near the fresh state as possible -- in other words, a year-round supply.

No discussion of the family foods would be complete without reference to that protector of the consumers' interests -- the Food and Drug Administration. Every packaged food in your market basket doubtless has a statement on it giving "net weight of contents"; and every label statement describing the contents must be in truthful terms, or sooner or later the manufacturer of the product will run afoul of the law.

So, among the hundreds of food materials and manufactured foods that go into your market basket there are few that are not improved by scientists at some time or other, many that are better for work done in the year just ended.

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